

THE ACADEMY

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THE LITERARY WEEK

In another page of the paper it will be found that one of our contributors, Mr. Newman Howard—who is himself an accomplished poet—takes his fling about a bard who has recently been discovered in a London East End lodging house. Mr. Howard is characterised by a great deal of generosity and enthusiasm, and writes with an abandon which the veteran reviewer will probably regard with a certain amount of envy as something that belonged to his own youth but has been irretrievably lost. The veteran's idea would probably have been to give one of those safe and moderate judgments on the work of this young man, which would not have been susceptible of being rightly described as either banning or blessing. Mr. Howard, however, if he will allow us a homely metaphor from a game which perhaps he does not know, "goes nap" every time.

The point in his criticism to which we would direct attention here is that he regards the appearance of this poet as a very expensive flower that has been produced after much digging and labour in the field of elementary education. It is somewhat hard on the working classes to say that this is all that has been produced by the vast expenditure of money on their education. At this time of day, as it happens, the best intellects do not naturally take to poetry or to imaginative literature of any kind. If we turn the leaf and look, not at the elementary schools and their products, but at what has been produced from the higher schools and from the Universities, we look in vain for the Keats or Shelley for whom Mr. Howard has been searching among the ex-pupils of the elementary schools. Yet he would be a very rash man who ventured to assert that the standard of intellectual achievement had been lowered in our time. We find intellect working not so much in literature as in the domain of science, which has brought forth during the last few years many strange and wonderful discoveries. If we have not had the poems of a Keats or a Shelley, we have had wireless telegraphy, radium, X-rays, and a number of kindred discoveries.

And there are many other ways in which trained imagination finds exercising ground than in writing verse. Indeed, those who live with their eyes open, figuratively as well as literally, in the present time must often feel that they are in an age of necromancy. Time and distance—two great obstacles to human progress in the past—have been overcome. So much so that—to take a homely instance—a man in London may play chess with a friend in New York and not require to wait more than a minute for the transmission of the move. Surely here is material for the fancy to work upon. Again, science has been busy with those products that were considered waste and useless and even injurious to human welfare in the past, and out of them are produced the most wondrous aids to human health and human comfort. Not a dust-heap, not a conglomeration of refuse, but to the eye of science contains potentialities that are practically immeasurable. Life itself has been pursued to its last cranny and hiding-place; and, if its ultimate secret be not disclosed, we have at least reduced the problem to its elementary and barest factors. Here, surely, is proof that

the age in which we live suffers from no poverty of intellect.

But the question still remains, what part of these results is due in any measure to the sum that has been expended upon elementary education. Mr. Newman Howard seems inclined to ignore this side of the question. There is no Keats and no Shelley, and therefore "Mr. William Davies stands for the highest articulate product of £300,000,000 worth of pedagogy." The assertion, it seems to us, only illustrates our contributor's habit of "going nap." We never heard or understood that it was any part of the duty of elementary schoolmasters to produce poets, and those in the past who have come from the proletariat did not, as far as we remember, owe a great deal to their school education. The most brilliant of them—Robert Burns—learnt far more from his home circle than from his schools or schoolmasters. The truth is that poetry is just one of those things which comes, not as a result of teaching but as "fire from heaven," and it would be utterly hopeless to expect the most efficient system of education ever devised to add anything to the body of poetical literature. If these results are to be fairly tested, Mr. Newman Howard should go, not to the library or the bookseller's shop, but to the laboratory, to the engine-room, to the world of hard and practical ideas. When he does so, he will find that no small proportion of those who are aiding progress in these respects have sprung from what Professor Karl Pearson would call "the unintellectual classes." Needless to say, however, that in commenting thus upon certain passages in our contributor's most generous appreciation of an obscure and unknown poet, we are far from lacking sympathy with Mr. Davies, but would be only too glad to join those others who are bent on lending him a helping hand.

We do not know that many of our readers belong to "that section of suffering humanity" on which Miss Marie Corelli, according to her own modest way of putting it, "inflicts" a periodical novel. But such as do, and some who don't, will read with curiosity the lady's advertisement—we mean letter—in another column. They will learn that the distinguished authoress wishes "to publicly emphasise" (*sic*) her statement that the "one and only" novel which she will produce next year is that announced by a certain firm of publishers. It appears that the "one and only" is to be as long as "Barabbas," whatever may be the length of that work, with which we are unfortunately unfamiliar, though this is a fact which, in the lady's elegant locution, we do not wish "to publicly emphasise," even if it does prevent our looking forward with fond anticipation to the appearance of the "one and only."

Memories of Sir Walter Scott are revived by the King's visit to Edinburgh next week. For on all occasions of a visit of the Sovereign to the Scottish Capital, his body-guard is formed by the Royal Company of Archers, and for this corps, on the visit of George IV. Sir Walter Scott designed a uniform, which, we are told, was of surpassing ugliness. The corps dates from the reign of James I. of Scotland, and in all its history only one court-martial has been held. This was in 1734, at a time when the Royal Company of Archers was a synonym for a hotbed of Jacobitism. Two officers who were not in sympathy with the movement conveniently absented themselves from a march, were court-martialled and cashiered, and the disturbing element was thus quietly and unobtrusively removed. Scott-lovers will be pleased to learn that Lord Barnard is having the ruins of Barnard Castle (which plays so large a part in "Rokeby") repaired. The Richard III. window and some other parts have been in a dangerous condition for some time past, but it is hoped that the steps which are being taken will suffice to save the ruins from falling into complete decay.

An event of some artistic interest occurred in Liverpool on Saturday last, when Sir George White unveiled a monument to the memory of those heroes belonging to the King's Liverpool Regiment who fell in our Afghan, Burmese and South African Wars. This occasion draws attention, however, to a fact of greater importance to British Art than the erection of a single monument, however noble. The site of the present memorial is in the so-called St. John's Gardens, which by a late decision of the City Council has been transformed from a mere secularised churchyard, into a grand artistic venture, almost if not absolutely unique in these islands. The situation of the gardens, sloping towards the river, from the back of the magnificent pile of St. George's Hall, is peculiarly fine, and indeed so commended itself to the imagination of Mr. George Frampton, R.A., that he presented to the Council a plan for laying out the ground as an ornamental setting for sculpture. The suggestion was accepted in its broad outlines, and the gardens in their new aspect present a cheering exhibition of civic enlightenment that is all too rare. The sculpture which they are intended to enshrine will be, primarily, monuments to Liverpool's worthiest citizens; some few in fact are already erected, the central place being given to the city's most illustrious son, the late W. E. Gladstone. This particular memorial is the work of Mr. Brock, R.A.; that unveiled last week is by Mr. Goscombe John, A.R.A.; while two other statues, to citizens of more local fame, are by Mr. Frampton. All indicate that in her open-air gallery of Sculpture devoted to the memory of those she delights to honour, Liverpool intends to be satisfied with nothing less than the best that British sculptors can produce.

The tenth of September was the anniversary of the birth of Mungo Park, whose "Travels in the Interior of Africa," is still a classic in this department of literature. This year is also the centenary of his death, though the exact date of his disappearance in the African wilds has never been ascertained. Like Livingstone, he needs no monument; but there might well be more memorials of him in the border country, which is somewhat apt to be neglectful of its illustrious sons. The ruined cottage where he was born, now marked out by a tablet, may be seen in the vale of Yarrow, and his initials still exist, carved upon a beech in the vale of "bonnie winding Teviot," not far from Minto Castle. The monument to him at Selkirk has long remained unfinished; though, as there is talk of centenary celebrations there, the opportunity may perhaps be taken of raising funds for its completion.

The name of Mungo Park suggests that of Scott, with whom he was acquainted. They were born in the same year, and each of them was the seventh son in a family of thirteen children. For Scott enthusiasts too this year counts in some sense as a centenary, for 1805 witnessed the publication and extraordinary sale of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel." In 1804 Scott had leased Ashestiel House, and the year after his entrance into his new residence the Lay was produced. The first edition was a quarto one of seven hundred and fifty copies, and in about thirty years eleven thousand copies of the poem had been sold.

It was only to be expected that this year should bring forth a big crop of Naval and Nelson books, and already a large number have appeared. Mr. Douglas Sladen's "The Admiral" is to be reissued, and Messrs. Constable are publishing a book by Mr. Walter Sichel on Lady Hamilton. In addition Messrs. Pearson are issuing "A Rapid Review of the Life of Nelson," and the Walter Scott Company announce a novel entitled "In Nelson's Day," which is to be illustrated with Nelson relics. Mr. John Masefield's "Sea Life in Nelson's Time" has just been issued also by Messrs. Methuen. But more interesting than these is "Trafalgar Refought," a book which Mr.

Alan H. Burgoyne has written with assistance from the late Sir William Laird Clowes. In this work Mr. Burgoyne seeks to answer the question: What would Trafalgar have been like had it been fought under modern conditions of steam, armour and weapons? This will be published by Messrs. Nelson. Mr. John Murray, too, is to publish a book very closely connected with the Nelson Centenary. "Three Dorset Captains at Trafalgar," being lives of Sir Thomas Masterman Hardy, Sir Charles Bullen, and Sir Henry Digby.

Hardy, as is well known, was Nelson's flag captain in the *Victory*. He was born at Kingston Russell according to some authorities, at Martinstown according to others, but he was certainly a native of Dorset. Sir Charles Bullen was flag captain to Lord Northesk, in the *Britannia*, and though not born in Dorset, was of a Dorset family, and spent much of his youth in the county. Sir Henry Digby commanded the *Africa*, and was related to the Admiral Digby who took Prince William Henry under his wing when the future king first went to sea. Messrs. Cassell are producing "Nelson and the Twentieth Century," by Mr. Arnold-White and Mr. E. Hallam, to which several distinguished naval officers have also contributed chapters.

We mentioned last week Mme. Emile Zola's handsome gift to a French charitable society. It is pleasant to record, by way of pendant to her generosity, a fact about Zola himself which has just come to light. It has been put about by his detractors that his press-campaign on behalf of ex-Captain Dreyfus was only undertaken by him on the promise of an exorbitant remuneration. It will be remembered that what he wrote on the "Affaire" appeared in the columns of the *Figaro*; and the editor of that journal has effectually throttled this calumny by the express statement that, so far from receiving an extravagant fee, the novelist refused to accept a single sou for the famous "J'accuse" letter and for those which followed it.

It is instructive to note the English papers and periodicals taken at some of the libraries and reading-rooms in German towns. In the Ducal Library at Gotha, for instance, the only English periodical on the shelves is *The Library*; in the Public Reading Room at Weimar we found *THE ACADEMY*, *The Edinburgh Review*, and in the great Free Reading Room at Jena, *THE ACADEMY*, *The Daily News*, *The Athenæum*, *The Spectator*, *The Nineteenth Century*, and *Mind*. The selection, on the whole, shows that the librarians know what they are about; but other people are not so well informed. Considering the widespread knowledge of the English tongue among educated Germans, it is most surprising how very slight and how very inaccurate is their acquaintance with the actual standing in England of contemporary newspapers, magazines, and fiction. We have been gravely assured in the last few weeks of the high importance of the works of authors of whom we have never heard, and of the influence, political and social, of newspapers which we prefer not to name.

The excellence of the lighter German magazines is so striking that it is a pity they do not penetrate to England. The coloured illustrations are triumphs of the art of colour-reproduction, and their beauty alone is sufficient reward for the expenditure of one and sixpence, the price of these monthlies. The letterpress is in keeping: there are articles on all sorts of subjects, brightly and interestingly written, stories and poems by writers of repute, and capital reviews of the new novels and plays. We have seen three of such periodicals: *Velhagen und Klasings Monatshefte*, *Westermanns Monatshefte*, and *Hochland*. It is hard to say which is best, but perhaps the palm may be assigned to the first-named.

LITERATURE

CHARLES DICKENS

The Life of Charles Dickens. As revealed in his Writings.
By PERCY FITZGERALD. (Chatto & Windus, 21s. net.)

MR. FITZGERALD'S book on Dickens contains little that is both new and valuable. Conceivably specialists in Dickens lore, in the supposed originals of his characters, in the houses and streets where they had their being, may find much matter to their liking in these volumes. They add little to our knowledge of the man, about whom we know quite enough already, or to our appreciation of the author. Dickens was eminent as an editor of other men's work: his letters show that he took great pains with the stories produced by the contributors to his magazines. In these tales we easily detect small touches from his hand, while he would even modify the construction. Mr. Fitzgerald had the fortune to be among the contributors to Dickens' periodicals—to be one of the pupils of his literary school. Dickens rebuked Mr. Fitzgerald for writing too much, and too hurriedly; the lessons have not borne fruit. The grammar of this book is not impeccable; "and" is too often superfluously united to "which." "Phenomenal" appears to be regarded as a synonym for "remarkable" or "extraordinary." Mr. Fitzgerald should remember that we live in a world of nothing but phenomena, that all things are "phenomenal." But, if he did not learn from Dickens how to write, vain is the discipline of reviewers. Indeed our author assures us that he is "well equipped as a 'literary man.'" If this confidence could possibly be shaken it might be worth while to offer a few *scholia* on Mr. Fitzgerald's parts of speech. But it is not worth while.

Of Dickens as of Scott, it is true that no experience was lost on him; all was transfigured by his fancy and reappeared, with more or less of disguise, in his novels. But we knew this before; and not very much is now added to our knowledge. To write "Pumblechook" as "Pumblechock" is novel, but not welcome or accurate (vol. i. p. 8). It must needs be that misprints come, but Mr. Fitzgerald abounds exceedingly in *coquilles*. Scott, we learn, "did not care so much for his native lakes and fells as did Boz for the obscure Rochester district." Scott had no native "lakes and fells"; he had lochs and hills. Moreover, we know all about Dickens' attachment to Rochester: we do not need many pages on that theme, unless, like "the good amiable Hughes" we are "almost mad on the subject of Boz." But it is really interesting to learn that Dickens "did not think much of 'Pickwick.'" One thinks nobly of "Pickwick," but is not inordinately curious about the Bull hotel, even if it be "the Blue Boar of 'Great Expectations'." Dr. Slammer suffices us: we hear without emotion that there was a real Dr. Lament. It is new to us that Anthony Trollope, in "The Warden," satirised Dickens as "Mr. Popular Sentiment"—there was a want of fineness in the witticism! If David Copperfield, as a child, was taken to a parish church, it appears, if Mr. Fitzgerald be right, that the infancy of Dickens himself endured many things from dissenting brethren of the baser sort, like Mr. Stiggins. Yet neither his father nor his mother appears to have been extremely "serious." It is curious that Dickens "left the impression of a well-read man"; the impression must have been taken when, as a child, he read the great English novels of the eighteenth century. In later life he was the reverse of bookish; his tales have very few of the literary touches so common in Fielding, Scott and Thackeray. It is a mystery that Dickens knew so much of schoolboys as he did, for his stay at Wellington House Academy must have been brief. Mr. Fitzgerald thinks that a tale by himself, based on fact, suggested to Dickens the stoppage of Edwin Drood's watch, which, the jeweller said, had never been rewound since a given moment. Mr. Proctor, discussing "Edwin Drood," could not imagine how the jeweller could possibly

know that; nor is the meaning explained by Mr. Fitzgerald.

There is a more important circumstance. Forster's "Life of Dickens" did not leave a very pleasant impression of the great humorist on all its readers. But Mr. Fitzgerald's book, like the talk of other old friends of Dickens, proves that his nature was such as to win the affectionate regard of all who knew him well; and this, at least, is a great thing to know. He was hospitably receptive of their smallest jests, and fond of recalling them—a gratifying trait which he shared with Scott. Mr. Fitzgerald seems unaware of this (vol. i. p. 197), but evidence is borne by Lockhart. Mr. Fitzgerald thinks Mr. C. A. Collins' "Cruise Upon Wheels" "laboriously funny." We have a much happier memory of that pleasant book. Collins met and described *La Grande Bête*, that nocturnal terror, but did not know that George Sand often mentions it in her rural sketches. "Boz himself had a wit of his own," is a not unexpected discovery by Mr. Fitzgerald! "Boz's Italian apparition" (vol. i. p. 217) was surely no "apparition," but a dream of normal sleep. A good deal is said about the Leigh Hunt—Skimpole matter, but nothing new. It is new to us that Forster sat for Podsnap, unconsciously; "it was like enough some one else, but not he." It was like enough Forster to carry away from the library of his club a presented copy of that collection by Mr. Frederick Lockhart, which by mischance contained copyright verses by Landor. He kept the book. Mr. Fitzgerald defends the caricature, in *Flora*, of Dickens' "old true love," the Dora of "David Copperfield." To caricature one's old true love as she appears in middle age, with superannuated graces, is to the last degree indefensible. Conceive Scott caricaturing *le Manteau Vert*! Dickens was not "fairly entitled to present this other view of the matter." Happily it is the worst thing that we know of him: *transeat cum caeteris erroribus*! But the action cannot be defended, and does not bear to be thought upon. Mr. Fitzgerald speaks of people who take a view which only the unchivalrous can fail to take as "cynics." The cynicism is all his own. He asserts Dickens' superiority to fact, as in what he calls Lady Dedlock's "monumental walk of over forty miles"; so he is not an absolute common Dickensian. The master had his failings as an author.

Speaking without book, it is our impression that the criticism by Lewes which so highly irritated Forster by dwelling on Dickens' power of visualisation to the extent of hallucination, was written after Dickens' death. Mr. Fitzgerald (vol. ii. p. 136, Notes) says that Lewes' theory "gave deep offence to Boz." If he is right, it seems that Dickens did not understand what Lewes meant on this point. In the de Tourville case of the man's alleged murder by throwing his wife over a precipice, we think that the man was convicted abroad. Mr. Fitzgerald speaks of "popular suspicion": the story, as we recall it, was very curious, more so than was generally known.

Under "Oddities" Mr. Fitzgerald discusses little freaks and slips in Dickens' work. "Esmond" is no less rich in such errors. However, the sentence about the Atlantic and the Red Sea being all one (vol. ii. p. 278), though elliptic, is not unintelligible. A watch may stop from "overwinding" and go on again, as a matter of fact, so that point may be removed from Mr. Fitzgerald's puzzles. (vol. ii. p. 280). Though Forster read Dickens' proofs, there are many more errors in Dickens' novels than in the Waverley novels. Indeed, we remember only one of this kind, the Indian dancing girls, in "The Surgeon's Daughter," "perfumed their Oriental domes." The reader can probably supply the proper text. Dickens could as rarely as Macaulay be induced to correct his errors; indeed Macaulay did consent to give Claverhouse his real Christian name at last. It was not, we bet, Mr. Winkle, but Mr. Snodgrass, who was "going to begin." On verifying the reference, we find that we win the bet, though, unlike Mr. Fitzgerald, we have not edited these Dickensian gems "for the Bibelot Series" (vol. ii. p. 284). People who cannot understand "his 'owls was organs," can never have read

with care John Knox's account of his interviews with Mary Stuart. Mr. Fitzgerald does not tell us where Dickens found, or may have found, the name of Gamp. Madame Gamp was—the present writer (with the Editorial permission) offers the reward of a copy of Mr. Fitzgerald's book to the first person who can tell the date, profession, and mode of death of Madame Gamp.

We cannot agree with Mr. Fitzgerald in thinking the Costigans an imitation of the Crummleses, or Morgan of Litimer, or Bowes of any character in fiction, or Wagg and Wenham of Pyke and Pluck, or Jos Sedley of Mr. Tupman. They are all much better (except in the case of the Costigans-Crummleses) than the supposed originals, and the Costigans are good in an entirely different fashion. As to Catherine Hayes, she was an historical character, and Thackeray called her by her name, causing an Irish row, because a singer, popular in Dublin, was a Miss Catherine Hayes.

We can only gossip about a book of gossip, which might well have been better arranged and more carefully written.

THE POET IN THE DOSS-HOUSE

The Soul's Destroyer and Other Poems. By WILLIAM H. DAVIES.
(To be bought of the Author, Farmhouse, Marshalsea Road, S.E. Price 2s. 6d.)

SOME one—we are not sure to whom the credit belongs—has excavated from far below the Mesozoic Social Strata an object rare always, and in its environment unique. Let us forestall disappointments, and at once assure the British public that to the multitude it is of no interest whatever; it has no market value; it is not a niblick exhumed, nor a radiobe, nor a motor-car; in short, it is merely a poet—a poet in a doss-house—not even a great poet at that. The days are past when poets were sent up like rockets in a carnival: we will not say of Mr. William Davies as a critic gravely said ten years ago of another, since but little heard of: "He is prodigal of every divine gift, pouring out untold treasure from his celestial cornucopia." But one divine gift he has, and withal a second not contemptible. The first resembles that by which the greatest of all poets made paradise of a paddock, noting the lilies of the field which toil not neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. The second is that of vivid characterisation—another quality, by the way, in which the Galilean was supreme; witness His scarification of the orthodox archbishops and opulent churchmen of the cathedral city of Tiberian Jerusalem.

Let us penetrate through his environment into the heart of the man. A doss-house is a thing more gruesome than the luxurious would suppose. It is not peopled only by inebriates: the statistics of Mr. Charles Booth and others have long exploded that legend, though it still lingers. Men are beaten down by other things than drink—Mr. Davies, for instance, drags a wooden leg through the world. We ourselves have visited a doss-house: not Mr. Davies'; that is in Southwark, and it is called the "Farm-house": ours was in Whitechapel, up a street called Flower and Dean Street. Slum euphemisms are, we suppose, propitiatory of the Goddess of Insanitation, as in Sophocles the Furies are called Eumenides. Down that street of Flowers, that too fragrant primrose path to perdition, no policeman dared venture; but we walked safe with guides, a man and a girl—a girl of young and virginal innocence. With her Christ went down into Hades: the Hell-porter opened and the damned looked up. From foul benches, through reeking air, they gazed; over a coke fire small canal fish were being roasted with jack-knives; caps were doffed; no man spoke. One only remained with covered head, provoking another to rise, curse and cuff him and stagger back to his wormy bench. A soul like William Davies' was in that man. But William Davies was then a boy at school:

"Where toil the Cymry deep in sunless pits . . .
And emptying all the hills to warm the world."

—a boy, it seems, rollicking with a pretty school-mate, burying her under fresh ferns and calling her forth "like Lazarus from the grave":

"She'd laughing come, to shake her curls until
Methought to hear full half a hundred bells.
A grown-up world took playful notice soon,
Made me feel shame that grew a greater love;
She was more chary of her laughter then
And more subdued her voice, as soft and sweet
As autumn's, blowing through his golden reeds.
In her sweet sympathies she was a woman
When scarcely she was more than child in years;
And yet one angry moment parted us,
And days of longing never joined us more."

He returned, it would seem, from many adventures to find her sadly wedded to a drunken spouse. "Her once blue eyes had not a gleam: no light to draw the waters up which staled upon her heart." This may be legend; it has the air of truth.

But to return to our doss-house—ours, not Mr. Davies'; his poems persuade us to withdraw that parable of the damned. The House of Peers has worse chance, if the Galilean spoke truth. Who knows what heaven the song of our girl companion opened? For Mr. William Davies in his doss-house, has also heard a girl singing and "she sang his soul to heaven from hell":

"She sang me to a chanted shore
Where seamajds' dripping tresses spread
To make the rocks gold carpeted.
She sang me back to childhood's way,
To fields with lambs to see at play,
And sheep that coughed like men. . ."

With pride he recalls that his grandfather was master of his own ship; the memory seems to have been inspired by the song; for now he is but "A wreck of men, one score and ten, and less his hope than older men." Such rapture the song brought that he prayed even to die upon it:

"Here darkly die,—die darkly here,
And lack e'en Friendship's common tear."

To our coarse sense the tenants of the den in the street of Flowers seemed stagnant, devoid of soul or idiosyncrasy; besotted beyond all differentiation. We know better now. Mr. William Davies has thumbnailed their diversities in a score of rough sketches such as these:

"Here's 'Irish' Tim, outspoken wretch,
Insult him, he is thy staunch friend;
But say 'Good morning,' civil like,
He'll damn thee then to thy life's end.

"'Haymaker' George, a pig for pickles,
And 'Brass,' for old clay pipes swops new;
Here's 'Balmy' Joe, he's cursèd clean,
Sweeps beetles in one's mutton stew.

"'Australian' Bill, ta'en sick away,
Came home to find his wife hath slid
To other arms; he's done with Liz,
But in his heart he wants the kid.

"Here's 'Sailor' pacing to and fro
Twice on his four hours' watch to see;
Ten paces forward, ten go aft—
A silent man and mystery."

Sad fellows, truly; but, while we read Mr. Davies' poems, they have charms for us above those of the prosperous. Their points of honour are as fine, their possessions are more real. The beer-lord has his park in fee simple, but William Davies possesses it in soul:

"It was that glade, its lower end; and I
Saw it outstretched as far as eye could see,
And greener earth ne'er answered bluer sky,
Nor Iris had such coloured company.
Some woody isles and huddled shrubberies,
With here and there a flower-patch all aflame,
Of cowslips, bluebells, daisy colonies,
And birds to sing, and all the while there came
A sound of music to surprise the air
With confidence, and empty its soul there."

And yet he has seen something better:

"This park, it was a miracle of care,
But sweeter far to me the prospects there:
The far beyond, where lived Romance near seas
And pools in haze, and in far realms of trees . . .
I saw where Severn had run wide and free,
Out where the Holms lie flat upon the sea
Whose wrinkles wizard Distance smoothed away,
And still sails flecked its face of silver grey."

Nay, his soul's possessions go out even unto the margin
of the sea where

"Billows rear and plunge to throw
The wind that on its archèd crest
Jockeys from shore to shore."

And further: right up into moonlit skies

"Where cloudal waves thy lighthouse sweep from view
And fleets of stars are perished in that flood."

This is poetry made by the proletariat.

Will Mr. Davies ever be a Classic like Blake or Wordsworth? We have not quoted the best of his work: we believe that, if he has wit and opportunity to perfect his skill, it is not impossible. At present, as we should expect, his blemishes, though sometimes charming—*naïve* with an Elizabethan charm and spontaneity—are often also irritating. He is peccable in grammar and logic, negligent of assonances, crude in his occasional classicisms, monotonous in the cadence of his blank verse, ineffectual in the evolution of the larger poetic ideas. "A good poet's made as well as born," said Ben Jonson of Shakespeare: the unblotted line was assuredly the issue only of that "true filing, that sweating, and striking of the second heat on the Muse's anvil," to which Shakespeare's boon friend bears witness. Mr. Davies has the one thing essential: all the others may be added unto him if, as we have said, he is given his chance and will take it.

Britain of late has spent more than half the sum of her National Debt in education: education, be it noted, not of muscle, lungs, or skill of hand; but book education; education that will not give us a farmer, a colonist, a soldier or a mechanic, but might have given us a second Keats or Shelley. And there is a sense in which they would not be dear at the price—not dearer perhaps than the winnings of a recent war; though had popular education brought forth a genius, popular apathy would likely enough have starved it to death, as it did Millet and Mozart. At present, however, it seems that all we have got for our money is possibly some slight decrease in crime, and for the rest a populace enamoured of the unfertile ledger; intolerant of the spade, the rifle and the plough; a populace inert, deoxygenised, regaling the grey industrialism of their pent lives with comic cuts and the penny novelettes. But here at last is a product wholesome and beautiful, however slight—a poet of the air and sunshine, sinewy, adventurous, sincere: one vocal only by the aid of elementary education. In his advent there is hope of other things. Shall we consummate this farce of a merely bookish curriculum—this fatuousness of a gymnasium only of the reading bra'n—by relegating to lifelong squalor its one small issue in kind? For, indeed, so far, it would seem, Mr. William Davies stands for the highest articulate product of £300,000,000 worth of pedagogy.

NEWMAN HOWARD.

THE CITIZEN

Socialism and Positive Science. By ENRICO FERRI, Professor of Penal Law in the University of Rome, Deputy. Translated by EDITH C. HARVEY from the French Edition of 1896. (The Independent Labour Party, 1s.)

The Citizen. A Study of the Individual and the Government. By NATHANIEL SOUTHGATE SHALER, Professor of Geology in Harvard University and Dean of Lawrence Scientific School. (Constable, 5s. net.)

THE Independent Labour party is fond of the words "science" and "evolution," but it is doubtful whether

the issue of the first volume of "The Socialist Library" will assist, in any substantial degree, the conversion of Englishmen to the doctrines of collectivism.

The book is a translation of a translation and may, conceivably, depart very far from the meaning and intentions of its author, Professor Ferri. But however this may be, it does not commend itself to us as scientific or even coherent. It is too much in the nature of a polemic to attract the opponents of "socialism" and so full of facile dogma that it cannot satisfy any serious inquirer.

The fact is that we do not find even the artistic verisimilitude of "science" in this bald and unconvincing narrative; and it is to be hoped that the publishers will in their own interest provide us with something better in the succeeding volumes of the series.

The following extracts afford fair specimens of the kind of argument pursued:

"In the social organism no individual ought to live without working—because in the individual organism all the cells fulfil their different functions. Thus the greatest number of artificial difficulties which opponents raise against Socialism are [sic] swept away. . . ."

"Anthropological varieties of temperament will secure without regulation the necessary distribution of the intellectual and manual labours. Each will prefer the work for which he feels the most ability. . . ."

It is probable that all the apostles of socialism are men of keen sympathy with human suffering; but it is unfortunate for the cause which they espouse that they altogether fail to recognise that human beings will not, save under the stress of some exceptional impulse, make any continuous movement, except very slowly, towards better social conditions; and the great unorganised mass of striving humanity, in this country at least, appears to regard the social revolution forecast by collectivist writers with great suspicion and its members are often prompt to deny that such writers voice its wishes or opinions to any serious extent.

From the loose reasoning and inadmissible postulates of our sentimental Professor of Penal Law it is a relief to turn to Mr. Shaler's simple and direct statement of the position of a good citizen of the great Republic.

Here, at least, we are free from the cant of "science" as marshalled to his side by the collectivist. "Commonplace" or even "dull" may be the verdict upon Mr. Shaler's book, but it is practical, intelligible, it contains information, and above all, it is wholesome. He writes for the young adult, and, if he appears over-anxious to promote what he styles "large" views of life, there is no doubt that his readers will learn much concerning the best aspirations of citizenship and take a kindlier view of their fellows, whether rich or poor, than Professor Ferri's treatise could inspire. The Italian is all for quarrelling with the conditions of life: the American speaks at times as one of the *Mayflower* voyagers might have done, with a simple unobtrusive goodness which is quite delightful. Some persons may complain that he possesses no Imperialist instincts; and he undoubtedly has a real horror of foreign conquest.

"Stealing," he says, "is rarely merely barefaced stealing—it is rather a process of appropriation by which the goods in question may be made to yield a larger return in the way of true value in the hands of the new holder";

and he has some pertinent observations on climatic influences:

"The men of our race are not fit for any land where the palms flourish—they do well only where snow rests on their housetops for a part of the year."

The ninth chapter, on "Wealth," is unworthy of a place in the book. It is almost unintelligible, and where it is intelligible it is ridiculous. Some curious methods of expression, too, disfigure this part of the volume, and now and again we encounter sentences the very simplicity of which provokes us. On the duty of the citizen to support the policeman we read something about "mobs":

"When men are crowded together and any of them become influenced by rage the fire is apt to spread to the throng, destroying all

that makes the citizen the calm judicious man who looks before and after the moment of his action. At all times we have to be on the watch for dangers that abide in the depths of men's souls, especially for the cruelty and bloodthirstiness of the savage," etc.

This being the author's point of view, it is not surprising to find him saying a little later:

"Except he goes as an armed man to support the officer of the law he should carefully avoid throngs which are likely to become 'mobs.'"

This reminds us of a charming passage contained in a seventeenth-century work of venery where the author, speaking of the land "bay" of a hunted stag, suggests that it is, then "convenient to take refuge behind some tree."

All that Mr. Shaler has to say on the subject of War is excellent:

"When a great war comes all the influences that favour the nurture of cultivated freemen disappear—a large part of the population is withdrawn from productive labour and set about the tasks of destruction. A battlefield of ordinary magnitude sees in the loss of life and of valuable materials a ruin which may well, measured in money value alone, aggregate as large as that of the great Chicago fire . . . In such a fight as Gettysburg . . . the immediate destruction . . . was one hundred and fifty million dollars, but this reckoning takes no account of the homes made desolate," etc.

The "Britisher" is accustomed to hold the public man of the United States somewhat cheap, but it is with some surprise that we read the following strictures passed by one so loyal to his native land as the author:

"It is easy to see that the gravest danger to our Government arises from the fact that our busy citizens cannot find the time to take a fit share in it. . . . This inattention to the affairs of the State is a growing evil . . . to it we may directly trace the degradation of our politics. In the absence of the true citizen the ordinary gain-seeking politician finds his chance. The danger, as is evident, even now with only our internal affairs to occupy our citizens' attention, is that the business of our federal Government may pass into the hands of men who seek to make politics a lucrative occupation."

Much of Mr. Shaler's book will, we think, be of greater interest to English than to American readers. On the negro question, for example, he has much to say that is liberal-minded (he calls the black men "wholesome people,") and in a sense illuminating.

"What is imperatively wanted is that the negroes be admitted there [in the social life beyond the household] and that their welcome be in the measure of their citizenly quality undiminished by any reference to their race."

The negro, when a slave, was much more a friend and companion of the white families than he has been since his emancipation, and Mr. Shaler, after proposing to increase his annual value from fifty to four hundred dollars by a large system of technical education, continues:

"We should make our people see that this blind dislike of any man is more than unworthy of them—it is in fact disgraceful that, large-minded folk as they, in general, are, they should be influenced by a motive that is essentially brutal—one from which the cultivated peoples of the Old World have long ago escaped."

The book has been written, confessedly, for the young; but it is for the young American in easy circumstances. It tells us much of the patriotism, much of the peculiar genius of the American people, much of dollars, a little of religion (the author refers, twice, to "the Lord," which is startling in a demure treatise of this kind); but its three hundred and forty pages are nowhere relieved by a glint of humour. Mr. Shaler is something akin to an idealist, but he has a very proper sense of the limits within which citizens of the great Republic are accustomed to confine "ideals," whether derived from philosophic generalising or from Holy Writ. Above all he impresses upon his readers the need for patience in awaiting those improvements in the lot of mankind which he so earnestly desires to see. It is to be feared that on this side of the Atlantic Mr. Shaler's book will be placed in the hands of our young persons "to be read during the summer holidays," an injunction which has earned for greater writers the unmitigated and ineradicable dislike of many generations of men, in other respects good citizens. If the youth of the United

States are compelled to read the book, the task will do them a world of good, but they will perhaps cherish some animosity against its author.

GEORGE CRABBE

THE town of Aldeburgh is celebrating, this week, the memory of her most notable son. George Crabbe's place among English poets is high, though not in the front rank; there is in him no strong sense of romance, nothing very ethereal or imaginative; his *lyrical* efforts are few, yet "Sir Eustace Grey" deserves to live; his monotonous adhesion to the mode and metre of Pope, without any considerable share of his grace and wit, has lost him many readers, who have taken him for a dry moralist masquerading in rhyme. On the other hand, there is a reality and sincerity in Crabbe which won the admiration of a man like Byron, otherwise so alien from his disposition. "The sense of tears in human things" defines Crabbe's particular endowment very well. Open him where you will, you find sympathy for the great inevitable sorrows, especially in their action on the poor and the lonely. Circumstances no doubt favoured his natural bent in this direction: he began his career as a village doctor's apprentice, doing also some farm work—he ended it as a vicar in Wiltshire. But his was not "the harvest of a quiet eye"; he lived with his melancholy gaze fixed upon sorrows and privations which he thought incurable: he strikes all the notes of sympathy and sadness, occasionally that of stoical make-the-best-of-it, but hardly ever that of ardent hope. Doubtless the later years of the eighteenth and the earlier years of the nineteenth century were times of deep gloom, not only in East Anglia, where Crabbe was born and bred, but in Leicestershire, where he held more than one living, and in Wiltshire, where he died Vicar of Trowbridge. Unlike his poetical contemporaries, he seems to have had no generous illusions about the French Revolution, no flicker of hope that an *auspicium melioris aevi* might be at hand; as a poet he reminds one of Arnold's eloquent sentence; he watches "the sufferings of a whole people, endured without intermission, through the whole life of man, from the cradle to the grave." He had witnessed the Gordon riots in 1780; and in the autumn of 1831, a few months before his death, he was in Clifton during the desperate outbreak in Bristol—a disgrace both to the city and to the Government of the day. A school-boy who grew to be a famous man—Charles Kingsley—saw the scene of the riot, the dead and the drunken lying side by side in the streets; "That sight," he said afterwards, "made me a Liberal." There was the note of hopefulness which Crabbe failed to feel. On the other hand, a truer sense of pity was never given to any man. It is hard to select illustrations of a quality universally present in his writings, but among the less hackneyed passages, that which describes the pitiful end of Charles, the patronised and then deserted artist ("Tales of the Hall," Book iii.), may serve: simplicity and poignancy can hardly be better combined:

"He then was sitting on a workhouse bed
And on the naked boards reclined his head,
Around were children with incessant cry,
And near was one, like him, about to die;
A broken chair's deal bottom held the store
That he required—he soon would need no more;
A yellow teapot, standing at his side,
From its half-spout the cold black tea supplied . . .
Here brought, some kind attendant he address'd,
And sought some trifles which he yet possess'd;
Then named a lightless closet, in a room
Hired at small rate, a garret's deepest gloom.
They sought the region, and they brought him all
That he his own, his proper wealth could call:
A better coat, less pieced; some linen neat,
Not whole; and papers, many a valued sheet;
Designs and drawings; these, at his desire,
Were placed before him at the chamber fire,
And while th' admiring people stood to gaze,
He, one by one, committed to the blaze,
Smiling in spleen; but one he held awhile,
And gave it to the flames, and could not smile."

Nevertheless, "at eventide there should be light," the gleam of remembered friendship brings solace, though not hope:

"And so there came a softness to his mind,
And he forgave the usage of mankind.
His long cold fingers now were press'd to mine,
And his faint smile of kinder thoughts gave sign;
His lips moved often as he tried to lend
His words their sound, and softly whispered 'Friend!'"

No one but Crabbe could have written that passage; but, in the somewhat bewildering jungle of his works, there are many passages as fine, and some, it may be, finer. The last page of "Delay has Danger," for instance, has a noble description of the effect of an autumnal landscape on a dejected mind: the praise of Tennyson, recorded and emphasised by so good a judge as the late Canon Ainger (English Men of Letters, "Crabbe," pp. 173-4), marks it as exceptionally fine, though the Canon's commendation of the whole story, of which it is the ornament, seems to us excessive: the final interview, if it can be called such, between the ill-mated Henry and the loyal Cecilia whom he has just jilted for the money of a fool, surely touches, if it does not plunge into, pure bathos. But in Crabbe, as in Wordsworth, the part, and it is no small part, which rises above mediocrity is so excellent, that—to adopt the fine phrase of Shelley in a different connection—it should "plead against oblivion for his name." The prophecy of Byron, in his immortal though splenetic onslaught on the Lake Poets, in the Dedication of "Don Juan."

"Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Moore, and Crabbe, will try
'Gainst you the question with posterity—"

is a good instance of the "vanity of dogmatising." Southey's serious poetry has probably sunk beyond soundings; but Coleridge and Wordsworth are secure of their place among the "serene creators of immortal things." How fares it with the rest of Byron's forecast? Campbell survives in a few memorable poems: Rogers is, undeservedly, almost forgotten: Scott's great triumph as a novelist has eclipsed, far too completely, at all events in England, the noble glow and fire of his poetry. Moore seems to most of us a graceful versifier with a pretty wit of his own, however gallantly Professor Brandes may strive to find in him a parallel to Byron. And Crabbe? has he too any chance of winning the *vitam futuri saeculi*? His latest biographer, Canon Ainger, writing less than three years ago, pronounced that "within the last twenty or thirty years, there has been a marked revival of interest in the poetry of Crabbe." He considers this resuscitation partly but not wholly due to the fascinating personality of Edward FitzGerald, and to his ingenious attempt to recall the poetry of Crabbe to public favour by substituting epitomes in prose for the duller and less readable portions of poems which as a whole he greatly admired. It would surely be worth while to reprint FitzGerald's "Readings from Crabbe," as a worthy memorial of two distinguished sons of Suffolk, whose names should be kept green at Aldeburgh and Woodbridge respectively. Crabbe's "Tales," and "Omar Khayyam" appeal to widely different temperaments, no doubt; yet they are the common glory of a district that is reckoned, perhaps unjustly, as more Bæotian than Attic.

Of Crabbe the man, as apart from the poet, Canon Ainger has left little to say. He had foibles, but apparently no vices: the dark angel of opium, who wrecked the career of one of his greatest contemporaries, touched him for a brief moment, and left him to a happier decline than that of Coleridge. To denounce him as a pluralist—though the *fact* is undeniable—is to misunderstand the perspective of the times in which he lived, and the system of patronage under which a Duke of Rutland honestly thought that the famous vicar of Trowbridge might reasonably hold Croxton Kerrial also, with a curate as his permanent deputy. That he was in his old age susceptible, in a decorous way, to female charms, is clear from the curious faint-hearted little tragi-comedy of his brief

engagement, in 1825, to Miss Ridout, "an elegant spinster of Sidmouth." He had the susceptibility of a poet, and preferred the society of women to that of men, in his later years.

But there is an aspect of Crabbe's life on which it is possible to look with pride and admiration, not so much for him as for his friends. As a penniless youth, he turned to a forlorn hope, and carried one of his early poems to Burke. That impulse made his fortune. Burke knew poetry when he saw it, and honest need when confronted with it: he helped, with moral and material encouragement, an unknown youth from whom he could not expect either service or flattery. Through Burke, Johnson was made acquainted with him, and spoke some appreciative words. Later, after the death of Burke, Charles Fox, himself in the grasp of his last illness, fulfilled a promise, made to the poet when they met at Burke's house, and revised "The Parish Register." Dudley North also, and the Duke of Rutland, treated Crabbe with the same disinterested benevolence: later still, the warm heart of Sir Walter Scott opened to welcome him as a friend. There must have been something great in a man who won so easily the hearts of other great men: Aldeburgh does well to commemorate her poetic son.

E. D. A. MORSHEAD.

THE VAGABOND

I CANNOT bide the sober town,
With decent villa, church and square:
Nor madam with her stylish gown,
Nor master with his glossy hair.
I cannot bide the sober town,
Nor madam with her stylish gown.

But I would over vale and hill,
And draw the breath of distance free,
And roam from opal dawn until
The twilight creeps across the lea.
Oh! I would over vale and hill,
And sleep in barn or ruin'd mill.

For I a vagabond was born,
I love to wander far and wide,
And seek out places most forlorn,
And evil hills where men have died.
For I a vagabond was born,
And love the twilight and the morn.

I love all wild and woeful lands
Where I may talk with woods and streams,
Or walk on desolate sea sands,
And tell the ocean all my dreams.
I love all wild and woeful lands,
And Ocean's dolorous wet sands.

I love to watch the sunset die,
And hear the large night's solemn words,
And on the moonlit heather lie,
And wake to greet the morning birds.
I love to watch the sunset die,
And on the moonlit heather lie.

For oh! I hate the sober town,
I hate the villa, church, and square,
I long to knock the houses down,
And ruffle master's glossy hair.
For oh! I hate the sober town,
And madam's modish silken gown.

But ah! the country air is pure,
And ah! the country lads are true,
And loving comrades they'll endure;
They'll stand by me, they'll stand by you.
But ah! the country air is pure,
And country friendships long endure.

DOUGLAS GOLDRING.

EMOTIONAL VERSE

IN every tongue, Poesy speaks with many voices in many tones, all beautiful and all deeply meaning in their several kinds. But none tells upon the listener with more effect than that which the reviewers celebrate, whenever they find it, as the "natural cry," the own unsought and unconsidered expression of some profoundly felt emotion. It is what is meant by "the lyrical cry," I suppose, being most often heard in songs, and then giving them an ever-new poignancy which all the ways and means of literary effort can never compass nor impart. There is no more art in it than in the sighing of a wind in a bank of reeds or its thrilling in the cordage of a ship—no such art, I mean, as makes perfect every stanza of Gray's *Elegy* without imbuing a line of it with the appeal of "The Flowers o' the Forest," or even of songs like Campbell's "Soldier's Dream." Literary language is not necessary to make literature of the voice of passion irrepressible. As might be shown by high examples, words and phrases in common use for generations have become literature by their utterance in the height of some one of the passions. Transmutation takes place, explain it how we may and if we can. When we have thought of the heaving forces and transmuting fires within the earth, most of us can go no farther. More strangely yet, the appeal of an emotion that speaks because it must is plainly heard, poignantly felt, when it has no other language than that of literary convention. This is an experience that may be drawn, for example, from some of Byron's lyrical outbursts of feeling, which, though they carried with them suspicion of being soon over, were sincere and strong beyond the common while they lasted. And it may be said, too, that it is only when we have a mind to be critical, and so leave being perfectly natural, that we can sing to ourselves such suspected verse of his as that beginning "Shades of evening" without being profoundly moved.

A few days ago I came upon a much humbler piece of verse in the Poet's Corner of a newspaper nearly a hundred years old, and though it was altogether in the convention of the time (Byron's own), and though it could not be said to have any poetical distinction in the literary sense alone, it did strike me as strongly expressive of deep and sincere feeling. It is, I think, a good example of verse which, without being poetry, rises to poetical heights by the fulness and animation of the feeling that inspired it; and it is, moreover, a feeling of remorse which has not often found expression in verse, although it is born in the wide realm of love and must have pained many a breast. I confess, too, that I like its convention, its old fashion; and some of the readers of the *ACADEMY* may like it too:

"Oh, gentle shade, reproach me not
For hours of mirth too late gone by;
Thy loveliness is ne'er forgot
However wild the revelry."

So it begins, and so goes on:

"Reproach me not, reproach me not
For mingling in the noisy scene.
Mine is indeed a gloomy lot
To think of joys that have but been,
To meditate on woes which yet
Must haunt my life and speed my fall:
Some minds would struggle to forget,
But mine would fain remember all.

"I think on thee—I think and sigh,
Though thoughts are sad and sighs are vain;
There's something in thy memory
That gives a loveliness to pain.
But yet, ah, gentle shade! forgive
The fault this wretched breast has known:
Had fate allowed thee but to live
Those shadowing faults had ne'er been shown.

"Thy friends are fading from my sight,
But from my mind they ne'er depart;
They leave behind them in their flight
Their images upon my heart.

And better 'twere that all should go
From this dark world since thou art gone
I need no friend to share my woe,
I love to weep apart, alone.

"Thy picture!—It is life, health, love,
To gaze upon that eye, that cheek,
Those lips which even in fancy move,
Which fancy teaches ev'n to speak.
Oh, I have hung so long at night
O'er thy still semblance, charmed from pain,
That I have thought the living light
Came beaming from those eyes again.

"At my dark heart thy image glows
In light of life divinely fair;
Youth sketched the form, when free from woe,
And faithful memory placed it there.
In revelry 'tis still with me,
In loneliness 'tis ne'er forgot:
My heart beats still the same to thee:
Reproach me not! Reproach me not!"

The *Champion* is the paper from which this old song comes: a political and literary journal so excellent in the substantial of merit that it can be read, page after page, with pleasure and profit at this day.

FREDERICK GREENWOOD.

A LITERARY CAUSERIE

SOPHOCLES

EVERY kind of poetry but one has risen from the natural desire of the human mind to express adequately, what it feels about the world, the soul, and God—the great *onta* always recognised, but first clearly formulated by Kant—on which the mind must exercise itself in all the arts, but most especially in poetry, the highest of the arts. Hence epic poetry, having mainly for its subject the world, but necessarily, and in the last resort the soul and God; lyric, directly dealing with the soul and indirectly with the world and God; dramatic, which, no doubt, the human mind would have ultimately evolved from the two other factors, but which took its origin solely from God. Tragedy was originally the choral worship of the God Dionysus; the actor, added to supply details of the god's history, was the source of the wonderful art which culminated in Shakespeare. Tragedy was the great gift to us of Periclean Athens; it was also the flower and bloom of Greek genius. The Greek has shown the way and distanced competition in every form of art except the novel, which was essayed only by the Greekling, and for which there is much to be said, but not here *inter alia*. Tragedy was raised by the Greek to such a height that we can fairly say he has in this branch of art (when everything is taken into consideration) been transcended only by Shakespeare.

Volumes have been written on the three great Attic Tragedians, and their excellences and characteristic differences have been expounded clearly and well. Our modern poets have been divided in their allegiance. Shelley and Swinburne are dominated by Æschylus. Browning has shown a feeling for his dæmonic force in a characteristic verse in which he writes of

"Æschylus' bronze-throat eagle-bark at blood."

But Browning's finely touched spirit is hampered in dealing both with Æschylus and with Euripides by his failure to achieve, not merely "the right word," as Tennyson said of him, but any kind of articulate expression—a want which has blurred all the efforts of a great psychological analyst (who might most fruitfully have written in prose) to lift into the light his deep soundings of the human soul. The modern poet who has given voice to the cultivated feeling of the present age is Matthew Arnold. He found in Sophocles the tragic poet

"Who saw life steadily and saw it whole."

This extraordinary genius had a youth, a middle age, and an old age on which Fortune showered all her choicest gifts. As a boy of sixteen, Sophocles was chosen on account of his signal beauty to lead the choir which celebrated the victory of Salamis. He walked in front of the procession naked with an ivory lyre in his hand. He attained high office in Athens. And we learn from a passage in Plato's "Republic" that when advancing years had closed certain avenues of pleasure he said:

"To my great delight I have escaped from desires, which I now look on as frantic and fierce tyrants."

His life was a brilliant triumph, and he grew very old philosophically and gracefully; yet from him came the most despairing indictment of life that literature presents:

"Not to be born is past all prizing best; but, when a man hath seen the light, this is next best by far, that with all speed he should go thither whence he has come."—(Oed. Col. 1225, Jebb's translation.)

It would be tiresome to try to draw again the oft-instituted comparison between the three great Athenian tragedians, but we may gather the views of Sophocles himself on his art from his criticisms on his great rivals. We read that he said to Æschylus: "I do what I ought to do without knowing"; and to Euripides: "I portray men, not as they are (in your fashion), but as the laws of art require." He does not photograph, he paints.

But this does not mean that Sophocles is "mealy-mouthed"—that he refrains from what might shock misplaced fastidiousness. There is a passage in the *Antigone* which excellently illustrates this. Antigone is condemned to die because, in defiance of Creon's decree, she has bestowed on the corpse of Polynices that ceremonial handful of dust which would exempt him from the consequences of unpaid burial rites—observances which in ancient tragedy play to the full as important a part as marriage-lines in the modern melodrama. Antigone is immured in a tomb, there to perish. Haemon, her betrothed lover, in vain pleads with his father Creon for her life. Failing, he goes to the tomb, to die with Antigone. At last the tyrant, terrified by the prophecies of Tiresias, relents. He seeks the tomb only to find Antigone dead, and Haemon embracing her lifeless body. Creon, too late, promises forgiveness, and calls on his son to come forth. Haemon spits in his father's face. Then he makes an ineffectual lunge at him with his sword, and straightway plunges the weapon in his own side.

Modern sentiment in the case of many editors refuses to allow the son to spit in his father's face; but the words (*πύσας προσώπῳ*) have that meaning and no other. To translate the words "with loathing in his looks" is to outrage the Greek and to misrepresent the ancient world. Sir R. Jebb gives the robust and natural interpretation, and so does Bulwer Lytton in "Athens, its Rise and Fall":

"Then glaring on his father with wild eyes,
The son stood dumb and spat upon his face,
And clutch'd the unnatural sword: the father fled;
And wroth as with the arm that missed a sire
The wretched son drove home into his heart
The abhorrent steel; yet ever, while dim sense
Struggled within the fast expiring soul,
Feebler and feebler still his stiffening arms
Clung to that virgin form; and every gasp
Of his last breath with bloody dews distain'd
The cold white cheek that was his pillow. So
Lies death embracing death."

It is interesting to find that Aristotle in his "Poetics" condemns the ineffectual lunge as bad art, but sees nothing shocking in the son's spitting in his father's face.

There are in Sophocles many signs of a kinship of spirit with the great English dramatist, especially in his appeal to eternal verities and cosmic laws. It is practically certain that Shakespeare was absolutely uninfluenced by the Greek poet when he wrote:

"The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre
Observe degrees, priority and place."

Yet very similar is the thought of Ajax:

"Do not all terrible and most puissant things
Yet bow to loftier majesties? The Winter,
Who walks forth scattering snows, gives place anon
To fruitage-laden Summer; and the orb
Of weary Night doth in her turn stand by,
And let shine out, with her white studs, the Day:
Stern tempest-blasts at last sing lullaby
To groaning seas: even the arch-tyrant, Sleep,
Doth loose his slaves, nor hold them chain'd for ever."
(*Ajax* 672, Calverley's translation.)

In a similar mood, also, no doubt, without any thought of the Sophoclean passage, Wordsworth in his sublime "Ode to Duty" wrote:

"Thou dost preserve the Stars from wrong;
And the most ancient Heavens, through Thee, are fresh and strong."

The great characteristic of Sophocles is sustained elevation of style which never swells into turgidity. Æschylus can rise to the dizzy heights of sublimity, but (rightly or wrongly) modern taste cannot help feeling how near the sublime is to the ridiculous when we meet such phrases as "dumb children of the undefiled one" for "fishes," "thirsty Dust, near-dwelling brother of Mud," "the maw of Salmysdessus' firth, stepmother of ships." Sophocles is always dignified, never tumid, and never degenerates into the "language of the market-place" (as the ancient critics called it), on which Euripides so largely drew. But he is bold in a degree not inferior to Pindar. Sir R. Jebb writes in his Introduction to the *Oedipus Rex*:

"In the lyric parts of his plays Sophocles is characterised by tones of feeling and passion which change with the most rapid sensibility—by boldness and sometimes confusion of metaphor—and by occasional indistinctness of imagery, as if the figurative notion was suddenly crossed in his mind by the literal."

Sophocles allows wild spiritual excitement to express itself in a confused welter of imagery as incapable of logical analysis as Hamlet's "take arms against a sea of troubles." A good instance of this is the lyric in the *Antigone* (599-604), where the Chorus deplore that the last ray of hope for the house of Oedipus is extinguished by the handful of earth sprinkled by Antigone on the corpse of Polynices. This is what the Chorus says:

"Now that ray of hope, which was shed above the last root of the house of Oedipus, is mowed down by—a handful of gory dust to the gods below, wild whirling words, and a fury in the heart."

The ray of hope is figured as a gleam of light above a plant. A word is applied to the ray which is strictly applicable only to the plant; it is "cut down." And by what is it cut down? No knife, but a handful of dust, and the contumacy and resolution which nerved the girl to defy the tyrant's decree.

His *Kommoi*, or lyrical dialogues between the Chorus and one of the actors, are a peculiar feature in the art of Sophocles, and give the mind of the reader the impression of a stately frieze. The action of the play stops, that we may have time to contemplate some noble deed, having before us not a picture but a majestic piece of sculpture.

R. Y. TYRRELL.

[Next week's *Causerie* will be "On Some Tendencies of Modern Verse" by Ford Madox Hueffer.]

FICTION

The Ford. By A. E. J. LEGGE. (Lane, 6s.)

THERE exists, unfortunately, a numerous class of readers who take a delight in gloating over descriptions of the supposed vice and luxury of modern English society, and many a second-rate novelist finds an easy road to a sort of popularity by pandering to this morbid taste. But Mr. Legge is not really a novelist of this stamp, and it is a

genuine disappointment to us that so many pages of "The Ford" should be filled with the unsavoury details of matrimonial infidelity. He has no need of these meretricious allurements to attract readers to his book. His literary style is excellent, and his skill in drawing character is above the average; but the cynical indifference with which he depicts the lax morality of his men and women detracts much from an otherwise admirable piece of work. There is nothing very original either in the situation out of which the plot grows or in the incidents by means of which it is developed; but all the principal actors and several of those of lesser degree possess individuality which is striking without appearing unnatural. Lord Gleddayne and his daughter; Richard Harrold, a retired soap manufacturer, and his son; and Paul Gleddayne, who after a chequered youth reforms at the age of fifty and succeeds to the peerage, are all characters shrewdly conceived and thoughtfully worked out: each one of them might easily have been, while none of them is, commonplace. And though as a general rule we think that contemporary party politics are better left out of a novel, we cannot but congratulate Mr. Legge on his life-like and impartial portraiture of two political snobs, one Conservative and one Radical, in the persons of Mr. Stair and Mr. Purling. The scene of the story is laid partly in the country, partly in the East End, and Mr. Legge writes as one who has a good knowledge of both: his descriptions of country life and of settlement life are not at all the less real for being couched in simple language. Altogether there is much to praise in this book; but we hope that in his next novel Mr. Legge will take a rather more generous view of humanity. All the people in "The Ford" are snobs, prigs or busybodies, if not worse.

Driven. By MARGARET WATSON. (Unwin, 6s.)

A STORY of West-country peasants before the Repeal of the Corn Laws. In those days a carter earned nine shillings a week and two pounds at Michaelmas. Perhaps like Hiram Rackstraw he had a cottage rent free, but no ground in which to grow potatoes. The farmers did not "hold with that" because they were afraid their men would get up and work for themselves before they worked for their master. So the carter had to buy food, firing, light and clothes for himself, his wife and five or six children; and bread was a shilling for a four-pound loaf and bacon was eighteenpence a pound. The breakfast-table problem was obviously to get any breakfast at all, and Hiram like others solved it by breaking the law. Yet he was one of the lucky people in regular work and earning half as much again as an ordinary labourer. George Webb, the hero of the story, could not get a job at all. He and his widowed mother starved for months on the sevenpence a day she earned irregularly by charring at a farm. In fact all those who tried to "live honest" were in most miserable circumstances. It was the thief and the poacher who flourished and saw his children flourishing. But of course the law was savage in its repression of crimes that the prevalent distress encouraged. It no longer hanged for sheep-stealing but it transported a man seven years for taking a turkey and a few chickens. We have the authority of the author of "Driven" for saying so, and we suppose she did not invent the facts for her well-told touching story. If it is a "novel with a purpose" it does not fail in its aim as such novels usually do. The characters themselves are interesting and not dully subsidiary to the tenets they were born to illustrate. Perhaps the author was moved by genuine sympathy with the sufferings of the poor when bread was dear, work scarce and wages low. That at any rate is the impression made by her story, so it is more effective than one inspired solely by political partisanship.

The Queen's Man. A Romance of the Wars of the Roses. By ELEANOR C. PRICE. (Constable, 6s.)

IN this historical romance Miss Price has given us plenty of alarms and excursions, love and hatred, treachery and

villainy, fightings and durance vile. Her heroine is not Margaret of Anjou, which is just as well when we recall how both Shakespeare and Scott drew the unhappy Queen, but another Margaret, "Golden Meg," granddaughter of Sir William Roden, a fine old hero of Agincourt. He commits the girl to the guardianship of Lady Marlowe, whom he thought to be a sound Lancastrian, but she goes over to the Yorkist side. Indeed, there is nothing like civil war as a spring of romance, and in telling the love-story of young Lord Marlowe and "Golden Meg" with all its tangle of sudden parting and "privy conspiracy and rebellion," Miss Price makes full use of her opportunities. The book is written with rather more distinction of style than is usual in romances of this kind.

FINE ART

THE USE AND ABUSE OF THE ANTIQUE

THE study of the antique forms by common consent so essential a part of the education of an artist that it is unnecessary to emphasise the importance of that study being intelligently conducted. For classical sculpture, like the Rhine-gold of Wagner's tetralogy, is a power of the middle kingdom, equally potent to produce good or evil according to the manner in which it is used. It is to be regretted that the very existence of this alternative is but seldom perceived by the drawing-master who, convinced that the study of the antique is right in theory, is reluctant to admit that it can possibly lead to evil effects in practice. In theory it is undoubtedly an immense advantage to the student to have recourse to and to familiarise himself with the noblest works of art that the world has seen. On the other hand, in practice we see, only too often, the student weary to death of these incomparable models and entirely devoid of any conception of their true beauty. It goes without saying that the models themselves are not responsible for this deplorable result, and it therefore only remains to be considered whether the student himself or the system of instruction is at fault.

Now, however greatly he may be lacking in capacity, the student, at the commencement of his art training, is scarcely ever wanting in zeal. The student who is forced against his own inclination to become a painter is so great a rarity as to be almost unknown. On the contrary, he has usually to overcome many objections at home before he is allowed to take the first step towards satisfying his ardent desire to become a figure-painter. So soon as he secures the parental permission to put himself under a drawing-master the latter will tell him that he must begin with the antique, and for the first three or four months our student applies himself to drawing Roman heads and Greek figures with patient industry, often with enthusiasm. But when six, nine, and twelve months pass by and still he is not permitted to draw from the life, the enthusiasm of our student wanes and the "beautiful stillness" of the statues begins to pall upon him. His drawing of them gets more and more mechanical till, when after two, three or more years he is at length permitted to draw from the life, his drawings of living human beings resemble nothing so much as figures of stone. The length of time during which the student is kept drawing from the antique, and from the antique only, is in no wise exaggerated in the above sketch of the first stage of his art training. There are now a few schools where the student is permitted to draw from the life at once, but, generally speaking, any one who desires to become a figure painter would, on joining a new school, be put back to the antique, even if he could show that he had already studied it elsewhere for a considerable length of time. There would be some show of reason for this lengthy apprenticeship if it could be shown that inability to satisfy the examiners with what is termed a "finished drawing" from the antique was an infallible test of artistic incapacity. But, as a matter of fact it is

nothing of the kind. At the British Museum there have ever been students who can make elaborate, carefully shaded drawings of the *Fates*, and yet so soon as they attempt to sketch a visitor in the gallery, can accomplish little more than an untrained child. On the other hand, there have ever been students with real talent for such sketching who cannot for the life of them produce the stippled-up drawing which, according to the examiners for the Academy Schools, is the sole test of merit. The more closely we follow the subsequent career of the student, the better shall we realise the true worth of this test. How many students who have carried off first prizes and high honours for their drawings from the antique have done nothing in after life? The writer knows of more than one who is as totally unable to earn his living in the present as he is as little likely to gain fame in the future. And yet there are not a few painters of established reputation who have candidly confessed their abject failure in their student days to draw from the antique with that minute accuracy which their masters desired.

It must not be thought that by thus insisting on the dangers with which it is fraught one is advocating the elimination of the study of the antique from the artist's education. The real danger consists not so much of directing the student to draw from the antique as compelling him to draw from the antique only. If the student were permitted to study from the life during the first six months of his study from the antique, he would no longer look upon the statues as so many obstacles to his desire, which is naturally to draw creatures of flesh and blood instead of figures of stone. Instead of regarding them as so many stone images which he is condemned to copy while wanting to do something else, he would see in them the triumphant achievements of fellow students who have brilliantly succeeding in doing what he is trying to do himself. It is well-nigh impossible for any student adequately to appreciate the beauty of Greek sculpture as a rendering of human form till he himself has some knowledge of the living figure. The more proficient he becomes in his knowledge of the life, the more clearly will he recognise the skill and perception shown in the antique, and then being, so to speak, fitly prepared to absorb its beauty, he may express the same, not by slavish imitation, but by importing its spirit into his rendering of modern life.

It is, then, the mental attitude in which the antique is approached which makes or mars its value in the education of the artist. If it be approached as the dead record of a dead past, as so much traditional beauty with which the student must be dosed six hours or so a day before he may study the living present, its study will lead to little good. If, on the contrary, it is considered as the living art of a period when life itself was full of grace, when the actual beauty of form was realised with exquisite sensitiveness and expressed with consummate technical skill, then its study cannot fail to inspire the student and be productive of good results. "Meek young men," says Emerson, "grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon have given, forgetful that Cicero, Locke and Bacon were only young men in libraries when they wrote these books. Hence, instead of Man Thinking, we have the Bookworm." Similarly, meek young men who grow up in sculpture galleries are apt to become pedants and archaeologists instead of artists. That which should have been to them for a guide they have made a tyrant over them. It is not sufficient to consider Greek sculpture good, it has become an Academic creed that it is the only good. So despotic has its rule become that when life conflicts with the antique we are told that life itself is wrong, and the drawing-master instructs us to correct the living model by the anthropometry of Greek sculpture. To such a pitch has this unreasoning worship of the antique arrived that the Greek sculptors are to-day praised more as the dogmatic founders of the one and only true ideal than as the creators of certain renderings of the real. Granted that there be an idealistic tendency in Greek art—though, be it noted

in passing, there was more than one ideal among the Greeks—is there not something topsy-turvy in the notion that a student should be able to create the ideal before he can be allowed to attempt to render the real? Shall we teach children to run before they are able to walk? It is only by the repeated observation of the real, whether that observation be conscious or unconscious, that the idea of the ideal is born in the mind of the individual. The ideal is, in fact, the imaginary union of a number of excellences which we have seen variously distributed. Unless we seek out those excellences in life, as the Greeks did, our ideal will be still-born. It is no sort of education to teach a student merely to copy what has been done before, for the end of art is not to imitate but to create. And this is why the Academic doctrine of recipes culled from the antique is not only useless but even harmful. It is calculated to fetter the liberty of the artist's observation and imagination. As in so many other branches of learning, Academism in art takes an utterly erroneous view of the aim of education, endeavouring to drive something into the mind of the student instead of seeking to draw forth that which in him is. To quote Emerson once more: "Books are for nothing but to inspire," and the same is true of Greek sculpture, whose proper function is not to give the student unalterable canons of measurement or teach him to "correct" the proportions of his living models, but to arouse his perception of beauty, to make him seek for it eagerly in his own surroundings; in short, to enforce the lesson that art must be true to its period, for it is because Greek sculpture is the vital expression of its own time that its influence has been and will be lasting.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ART.

- Boulton, William B. *Sir Joshua Reynolds*. With forty-nine illustrations. Methuen, 7s. 6d. net.
Hill, G. F., M.A. *Pisanello*. Duckworth, 7s. 6d. net.

BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS.

- Fitzgerald, Percy. *The Life of Charles Dickens*. In two vols. Chatto & Windus, 21s. net. (See p. 942.)
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Angélique of Port Royal, 1591-1661. By A. K. H. Skeffington, 10s. net.
Lucas, E. V. *The Life of Charles Lamb*. In 2 vols. Methuen, 21s. net.

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FICTION.

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CORRESPONDENCE

THE MERMAID REPERTORY THEATRE

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—I regret to have to inform you that owing to lack of support on the part of the public the performances of the Mermaid Repertory Theatre at Great Queen Street must be suspended, for the present, after the performance of to-morrow—Saturday—evening; and I am writing to ask if you will give publicity to my appeal to those people who are interested in the work which I am trying to do, that they may give me such support as may make the continuance of that work possible.

I think I may claim that the sum of what has been already done represents a certain measure of artistic achievement. The first production was Milton's *Mask of "Comus,"* given in the Botanical Gardens, Regent's Park, in June 1903. This was followed by Ben Jonson's *Mask of Cupid and Fletcher's Faithful Shepherdess,* and later by Congreve's *Way of the World* (at the Court Theatre), after this came *The Knight of the Burning Pestle, The Broken Heart, The Confederacy, and The Maid's Tragedy* (at the Royalty Theatre). And last season, at the Great Queen Street Theatre, were given *Sheridan's Critic, Ben Jonson's Silent Woman, and Gilbert's Palace of Truth.*

All these productions have been received always generously and often enthusiastically, not only by the Press but also by the many people who have written to me about them. The moral support which I have obtained throughout has in fact been most encouraging.

The material support, on the other hand, has scarcely been sufficient to justify me in continuing my work single-handed. My weekly cost of conducting the theatre—and this is on very economical lines—is over £300. This week, if my expectations of to-morrow's two performances are realised, I shall have received towards that sum about £12 altogether. If the many enthusiastic people who have allowed me to use their names as sympathising with the work I am doing, who have visited my performances on the free list, and who have written me glowing letters of congratulation on the "National Service" which I am performing had given me even a moderate amount of financial support, the disproportion in the above figures might not have been so great.

Of course I have had some most loyal supporters and subscribers, or the plays could not have been produced at all. What I mean is that there are many who are apparently anxious that the work which I am doing should be done, and who express themselves very kindly on the way in which I am doing it, but who think that they are under

no obligation to do more. They forget that unfortunately the production of these plays cannot hope to be supported entirely by the enthusiastic but not wealthy public who take tickets.

I hope that it may be possible shortly to resume the performances, and to proceed with the programme of old and new plays which I have announced. In order that this may be done, may I appeal to any one who would care to afford the undertaking any kind of material support to communicate with me at this address, when I shall be glad to supply him with full particulars.

With apologies for trespassing so far upon your space,

PHILIP CARR.

3 Old Palace Chambers, Whitehall, S.W.
September 8.

TOM MOORE AND BATH

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—In your issue of the 9th inst. there is a most singular error in one of the paragraphs relating to Tom Moore, Crabbe, Bowles, and the town of Bath. It is there stated that Moore's only connection with the district was "an occasional visit to Lord Lansdowne at Bowood." On the contrary, Sloperton Cottage, at Bromham, near Bowood, was the poet's home for the greater part of his adult life. There he died at the age of 72, after some 37 years of continuous residence with his family and that close identification with the neighbourhood which would be expected in the case of so popular, sociable, and cheerful a person. He lies buried beneath a raised-in monument in Bromham Churchyard, and a west window, besides a tablet in the beautiful old building itself, testify to the esteem and love with which he was regarded by neighbours of all classes. His sons were educated in the county, at the Old Marlborough Grammar School. Both they, and his favourite daughter Anastasia predeceased him. His wife outlived him thirteen years. The whole family but one son and an infant daughter lie, I think, in the grave at Bromham. Sloperton Cottage, ivy-clad and picturesque, still stands by the roadside on a high ridge with a beautiful prospect towards Bath and the West from the fields around it, and is now occupied by a member of the Spye-Park family. Many old people in the district remember the poet. However, his own voluminous correspondence, etc., dated from his Wiltshire home and filling several volumes makes further comment superfluous.

September 11.

A. G. BRADLEY.

P.S.—Bromham is twelve miles from Bath as the crow flies and nearer to it than either Bremhill or Bowood.

FAVOURITE BOOKS

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—I have just re-read with pleasure the following somewhat unknown books: W. J. Stillman's "Billy and Hans," Olive Schreiner's "Dream Life and Real Life," Ernest Seton Thompson's "Wild Animals I have Known." Seton Thompson's many nature books, however, are finding the public they so truly deserve.

A. DENHOLM BRASH.

AN EXPLANATION TO THE BOOK TRADE

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—I regret to trespass upon your valuable space for what must seem at first glance to support the old press parrot-cry "self-advertisement," as I am, of course, aware that no newspapers ever sink their dignity so far as to advertise themselves at all. But the immediate point at issue is one which more largely affects others than myself and which, in the interests of the whole bookselling trade and the reading public, I am anxious to make clear. It is merely this: That Messrs. Constable and Co. are to be the publishers of the one and only novel which will be inflicted by me upon a section of suffering humanity in the year 1906. I am compelled to publicly emphasise this fact, as a rival firm of publishers (whose ways of business are not entirely unknown to me) are industriously circulating a report throughout the bookselling world that Messrs. Constable have only secured a "short" book from me, and that I am preparing a "long" novel for publication in the same year (1906) with another firm, which will quite "kill" Messrs. Constable's venture. I need not expatiate upon the unworthy spirit which prompts the circulation of an utterly false rumour, in the hope that it may injure and check the enterprise of another firm. I have only to say on my part, and in the most emphatic manner possible, that the novel I am at present writing will be the only one issued from my pen in 1906; that, so far from being a "short" book, it will be of the average length (quite as long as "Barabbas" for example), and that the publishers of this one and only book will be Messrs. Constable of St. James' Street, Haymarket. Furthermore, that I have no intention of writing any other novel for any other firm whatsoever at present, having refused to sign any contracts binding me to future work and therefore being in that condition which I consider the most enviable on earth—the state of perfect freedom.

September 8.

MARIE CORELLI.

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